

Explore Your North Coast Parks



A World Heritage Site

This emblem symbolizes the interdependence of cultural and natural properties: the central square is a form created by man and the circle represents nature, the two being intimately linked. The emblem is round like the world, but at the same time it is a symbol of protection.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific & Cultural Organization, (UNESCO) encourages policies for safeguarding the environment and society's fragile history. UNESCO also promotes global networking for protection of characteristic ecosystems of the world's natural regions.

Only 165 international resources, such as the Palace of Versailles in France and the Great Barrier Reef off the coast of Australia, have been declared World Heritage Sites. Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park, Del Norte Coast Redwoods State Park, Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park and Redwood National Park are jointly recognized and are also listed as one of 226 Biosphere Reserves around the world.



Redwood National & State Parks

Experiencing the tranquility of towering redwood groves or the peaceful grazing of elk in a golden prairie will become even more valuable to a growing population in the next century. A century ago, as the idea for creating parks was embraced, the ambitions of many to preserve redwood forests germinated and grew into the redwood parks we appreciate today.

By efficient and cost effective use of combined resources of national and state parks, we are better able to serve the visiting public and protect the natural resource. As an example of the spirit of cooperation, Redwood National and State Park staff and volunteers combined their efforts to produce this most accurate and detailed trail map.

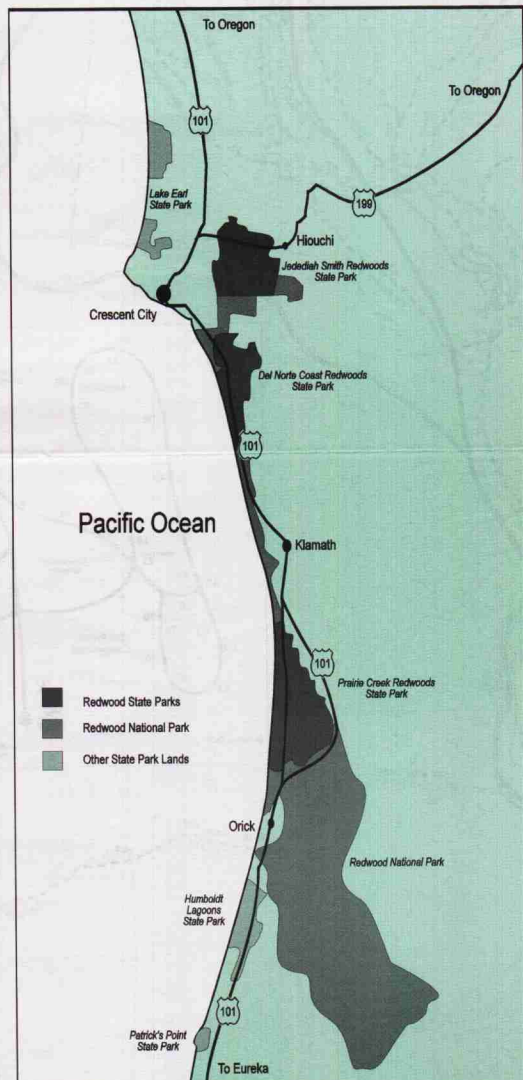
Redwood National and State Parks, together a World Heritage Site and International Biosphere Reserve maximize protection of resources cherished by citizens of many nations. As a visitor, you play an important role in this legacy. You are a temporary visitor to the permanent homes of park wildlife and plants, please be a good guest! Take only pictures, leave only footprints.



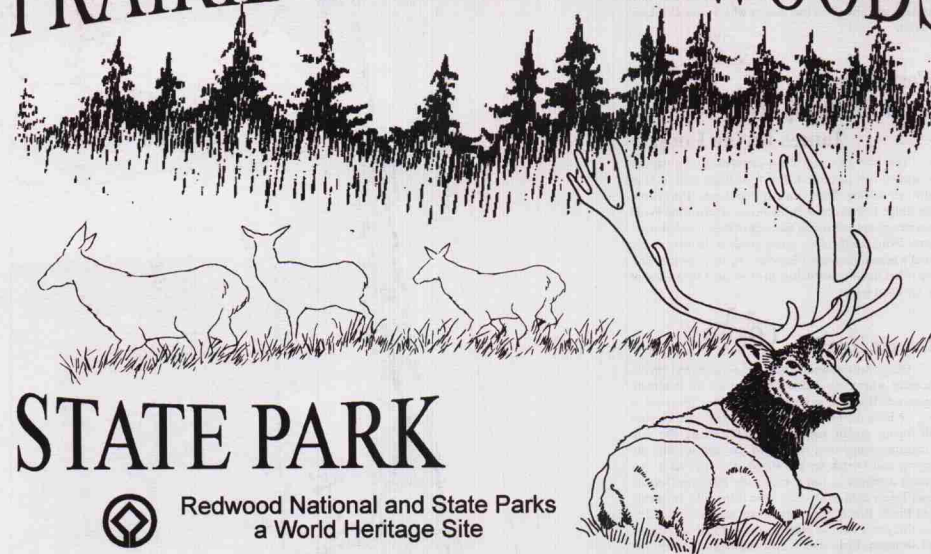
Save-the-Redwoods League

As you drive through the Park or walk along the many miles of trails, you will see signs naming some of the groves along the way. These groves have been "purchased" by private individuals and organizations through the Save-the-Redwoods League's Memorial Grove Program. The program was started in 1921. Now more than 700 groves have been established in the redwood national and state parks, and more are being established each year.

Donors don't actually own these memorial groves. Save-the-Redwoods League uses their donations to purchase additional redwood lands which they then donate to the parks. Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park has over 280 memorial groves, and many groves are still available. If you would like more information about the Memorial Grove Program, contact the Save-the-Redwoods League at 114 Sansome Street, Room 605, San Francisco CA 94104.



PRAIRIE CREEK REDWOODS



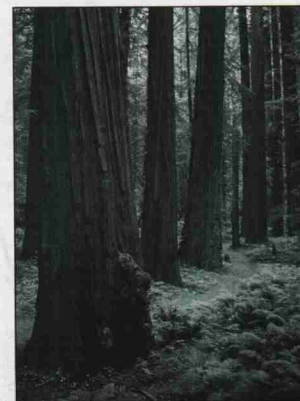
STATE PARK



Redwood National and State Parks
a World Heritage Site

Park Map & Guide

Welcome to Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park, home of the world's tallest trees. Set aside in the early 1920's by the forethought of the people of California and the generosity of the Save-the-Redwoods League donors, the Park is a 14,000 plus acre sanctuary of old growth coast redwood.



Prairie Creek on foot

There are over 70 miles of hiking trails through verdant forests and along wild and scenic beaches. As the Park is a preserve of uncut forest, all trails lead you through the world's tallest trees. Nowhere can you better appreciate the splendor of an ancient redwood forest. Take time to walk some of the many and varied trails. There are all-day hikes and short leisurely strolls. The terrain is relatively mild with only 800 feet of elevation gain. Please practice "minimum impact" hiking. Crosscutting trails causes erosion and destroys plants. Bicycles are not allowed on trails unless otherwise indicated.

Camping

The Park has two developed campgrounds. The Elk Prairie camp has 75 campsites and is located 6 miles north of Orick just off Highway 101 on the Newton B. Drury Scenic Parkway. Gold Bluffs Beach campground has 25 campsites and is reached by way of Davison Road, off Highway 101, 3 miles north of Orick. Both campgrounds offer fireplaces, tables and water nearby. There are restrooms with flush toilets and showers at both campgrounds. Reservations for the Elk Prairie campground can be made from May through September by phoning DESTINET at 1-800-444-7275. The rest of the year the campground is open on a 1st come-1st served basis. Gold Bluffs campground is on a 1st come-1st served basis year round. There are also two backcountry camps and an environmental camp within the Park. Backcountry campers are reminded they must register and park at the visitor center and must camp in the designated campsites.

Prairie Creek by car

The Newton B. Drury Scenic Parkway winds its way through the magnificent redwoods of the Park. There are numerous "turnouts" along the way. Stop and walk a short distance to better experience the redwood forest.

Heading north from the visitor center

1/4 mile north of the Elk Prairie campground entrance is a 3 mile scenic road offering spectacular views of old growth redwoods. **Cal Barrel Road** is a narrow packed gravel road, but it is in good condition. *No trailers or motorhomes.* Approximately 1/2 mile north of Cal Barrel Road turn into the large **Big Tree** parking area. Walk a short distance to view Big Tree which is over 300' tall and 21' in diameter.

Many additional trailheads can be accessed by continuing north along the Parkway. About 7 miles north of the campground turn west onto **Coastal Drive** for a scenic overlook of Gold Bluffs Beach. Continue 6 miles north along Coastal Drive to the south bank of the Klamath River and back to Highway 101 or return to the Parkway and head north 1 mile to reach Highway 101.

Heading south from the visitor center

Follow the Parkway 1 mile south and rejoin Highway 101. Another 3 miles south of this junction, turn onto Davison Road to reach Gold Bluffs Beach. This gravel road is narrow and rough, but 4-wheel drive is not necessary. Vehicles over 24 feet in length or 8 feet in width are prohibited. It is 4 miles from Highway 101 to the beach and an additional 4 miles up the Beach Road to Fern Canyon. You are required to pay a day use fee to access Fern Canyon.

Park Plants

The coast redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*) is the dominant tree in the Park. The coast redwood region is a narrow 450-mile strip of land extending from southern Oregon to 150 miles south of San Francisco. The "Redwood Belt," as this region is known, is closely tied to the Pacific Ocean, where thick summer fogs prevail, temperatures are moderate year round and winter rainfall can reach 100 inches. Redwoods, with their massive trunks and shallow root systems, depend on this moist and mild climate.

A coast redwood can live to be over 2000 years old and can soar to over 360 feet in height. In sharp contrast to their towering and large stature, redwoods have many delicate features. The sharp-pointed needles grow on branchlets, forming flat sprays. Their cones are quite small, approximately one-inch long. It would take about 123,000 redwood seeds to equal one pound!

Redwoods have few natural enemies. Tannic acid makes redwood resistant to diseases, insect infestations and its thick fibrous bark resists fire.

Redwoods, so named for their reddish-colored heartwood, are generally found in association with other tree species, principally Douglas-fir, Sitka spruce, big leaf maple, tanoak and red alder. Nine species of fern decorate the forest as well as salal, oxalis, western azalea, rhododendron, trillium, huckleberry, salmon berry, blackberry and numerous flowering herbs.



Western Trillium
Trillium ovatum



Park Animals

Watch for native Roosevelt elk in the prairie along the Parkway and on spectacular Gold Bluffs beach. Whale, rabbit, squirrel, raccoon, mink, otter, fox, coyote, mountain lion, bobcat, and bear might also be spotted. And of course the infamous banana slug, an important and welcome resident in the forest, is readily viewable. Remember, park animals are the residents of the forest and beaches...we are their guests. Please treat their home with respect.



Roosevelt elk

This large member of the deer family is also known as "wapiti," an Indian term meaning white rump. The light rump patch contrasting strongly with its tawny brown coat makes the elk easy to identify. The hair is darker on the head, neck and legs and forms a shaggy mane in winter. Elk stand about 4 1/2' on long legs and weigh between 700 and 1000 pounds. Fall is the "rut" season when the herd bull claims his harem of cows. In spring, the cows give birth to a single calf, and the bulls shed their heavy branched antlers and begin to grow velvet-covered replacements. Roosevelt elk are native to the Pacific Northwest, and their local population numbers around 2000 animals.



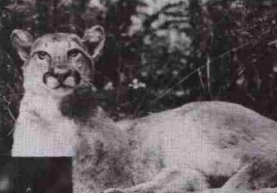
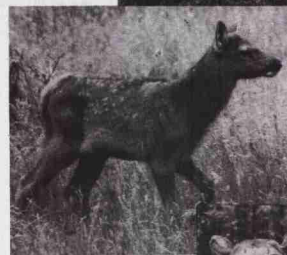
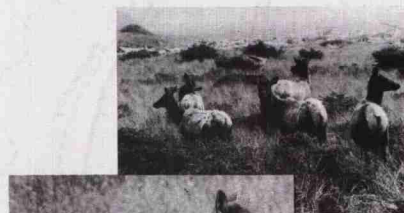
Black bear

The Park is black bear country. Contrary to their name, these small native bears range in color from jet black to cinnamon brown, and may weigh up to 300 pounds. Their shaggy hair and ambling gait tend to disguise the fact that they are well-muscled athletic animals who move quickly when they wish and climb trees with ease. Bears are solitary animals except when attracted by man's carelessness. In winter they become dormant, but do not completely hibernate. A bear's natural diet consists largely of vegetation but they also eat meat when the opportunity arises. Black bears are timid and will move away if they hear or smell people. Unfortunately, bears quickly learn that campgrounds can provide easily obtained food. Their exposure to man then makes them less afraid and occasionally dangerous. Don't add to the problems with bears...keep all your food supplies and equipment locked away or hung on a high branch. Life for bears is a constant battle to obtain enough food. Like ours, their instinct is to defend what they consider "their" food supply.



Birds of the redwoods

Over 260 species of birds have been sighted within the Park boundaries. The combination of open prairie, forest, streamside woodlands, coastal headlands, beach and ocean provides a wide variety of habitats within which birds can find food and shelter. Some species of special note include the spotted owl and marbled murrelet. Both are believed to be dependent on old growth forest. Watch and listen for murrelets at dawn and dusk throughout the year...the Park is considered an oasis for the murrelet. One of the most common birds you might encounter is the Stellar's jay. This bright blue bird is commonly spotted near campsites in search of food. Please don't feed or encourage them. Also listen for the "squeaky brakes" bird...the varied thrush.



Park Rules & Reasons

Pets - Family pets are welcome in the campgrounds, on Gold Bluffs beach, and on park roads. Pets must be on a leash at all times and should not be left unattended. Pets are not allowed on any trails because they may introduce disease, threaten park animals and become lost or injured. Pets are not allowed in park buildings or at interpretive programs.

Plants - Plants are beautiful attractions of the Park. You are welcome to harvest berries but plants, mushrooms and flowers are protected and removal is not allowed.

Firewood - Over 65 million people visit California State Parks each year. If each person collected their camp fuel the soil would soon suffer from lack of nutrients. You are welcome to collect small driftwood from Gold Bluffs beach, but collecting wood in the forest is not permitted. You are welcome to bring your own firewood or purchase it at the Park.

Fires - Fires are allowed only in designated fireplaces. An oversized campfire or careless cigarette could be disastrous.

Bicycles - Bicycles are welcome on any road where public vehicles are allowed but not on trails unless otherwise designated.

Litter - Please keep the park clean. Trash is unsightly and can be a hazard to the park animals. Please use recycle bins found throughout the Park.

Archaeological & Geologic Features - All features are protected and disturbing or collecting is not allowed. Leave any historical artifacts you might discover in place and let the park staff know of its whereabouts. An artifact "out-of-place" is historical knowledge lost.

Park Animals - Please do not feed any animals. People food is not a healthy diet for wild animals and they'll frequently starve after visitors leave for the winter. Remember, they may seem tame but these are wild animals. Let's keep them that way!

Peace & Quiet - Some folks drove a long way to get away from it all. Observe the quiet hours of 10 PM to 6 AM. No generators from 8 PM to 10 AM. Please be considerate of fellow campers.

Vehicle Operation - Please observe the Park campground speed limit of 15 MPH. There are lots of people around and an accident could really spoil a vacation.



Published by

North Coast Redwood
Interpretive Association

The NCRIA is a nonprofit, volunteer organization dedicated to assisting state parks along the northern California coast. Our purpose is to increase public awareness of the rare and natural beauty of the redwood environment. We operate natural history bookstores at Prairie Creek and Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Parks. Bookstore sales, donations and special events generate funding for: development of interpretive facilities such as visitor centers; improvement of interpretive programs and equipment; design and construction of exhibits and displays; training opportunities; and publication of informative pamphlets and park maps.

The NCRIA welcomes new members and park volunteers. Join us and get involved in your state parks. Basic \$7.50 Supporting \$50 Life \$100

North Coast Redwood
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Cover graphics by
Carol Stalder and Charles McLawhorn
Special thanks to Dave Best, RNP.
Map #00096.GIS 00096.1295.AML
Printed on recycled paper with soy based ink.
Not printed at state expense.

Five Minute Trail

Wandering through wonderful examples of old growth redwoods, this mini-trail features several living trees hollowed out by fire. Paint traces still remain of where a family lived in one of the hollow trees during the 1930's. The trail is located just behind the Prairie Creek visitor center.

Revelation Trail

Developed for the visually impaired, this all access trail encourages you to use all of your senses while treating you to beautiful forest scenery. Feel the soft bark of a redwood. Compare it to the smooth covering of a tanoak. Smell the aromatic leaves of the California bay. Listen to the splash of the creek. These are just a few of the many natural realities that can be experienced on this trail located between the Prairie Creek visitor center and campground.

Nature Trail

Developed to help familiarize you with the redwood ecosystem, this 1.2 mile stroll leads you past many interesting forest features and helps you better understand this unique environment. A trail guide is available from the visitor center. The trail begins in front of the Prairie Creek visitor center and ends near the campground.

Elk Prairie Trail

This 1.4 mile trail circles the edge of Elk Prairie passing through old growth forest and provides good views of the prairie. This trail is often a good place to watch Roosevelt elk, but caution must be used as elk are wild animals and should not be approached. Most of the trail skirts the eastern edge of the prairie beginning from the Cathedral Trees trail and ending in the campground. You can link this trail with the Nature trail to make a 2.6 mile loop.

Fern Canyon Loop

Lush ferns cover the canyon's 50 foot walls and moss carpets fallen tree trunks. The most common fern is the delicate five-fingered fern, but lady and sword ferns are also present. Follow the crystalline creek that winds up the canyon floor then climb the steps into virgin forest and back to the mouth of the canyon. Tread lightly as the creekbed is home to a rare species of tailed frog.

South Fork-
Rhododendron -
Brown Creek Loop

This loop is just long enough and steep enough to stimulate your tight muscles. Its spectacular pristine beauty will stretch your eyes, mind and imagination as well. One of the Park's most beautiful hikes at any time of the year, it will reward you in spring with a dazzling array of rhododendrons and other wildflowers. You can stroll up Brown Creek and return by the same trail for an easy 2.6 mile round trip. Or continue the loop for a steeper 3.3 mile hike.

Miner's Ridge -
Coastal -
James Irvine Loop

In the early 1850's, Miner's Ridge and Irvine trails were the main routes to the gold fields on Gold Bluffs Beach. Today explorers come for different reasons: to see the magnificent virgin forest; to revel in nature's quiet and to explore the nonnegotiable treasure of Fern Canyon. Explore the scenic wonders of Miner's Ridge, relax while walking up the beach to Fern Canyon, and stroll along a crystalline creek on the James Irvine. This easy 11 mile day-hike will give you a true taste of what Prairie Creek has to offer.

West Ridge -
Friendship Ridge -
James Irvine Loop

This 12.5 mile loop offers varied elevations through the ancient redwood forest. The West Ridge trail features redwoods soaring above fern carpeted slopes. The Friendship Ridge trail drops near the ocean where wind-swept trees struggle to survive on the edge of their comfort zone. James Irvine winds along a tiny creek at the base of the world's tallest trees and a broadleaf riparian habitat. This loop offers many opportunities to experience the silence of the redwood forest.

Bicycle Trail

Old growth redwood forests are precious and limited resources where we should limit our use to minimum impact activities such as hiking. But for those who wish to ride, we have designated a 19 mile bicycle trail for your enjoyment. Begin your ride by following the Elk Prairiecampground road where you can link up with the Jogging trail (watch for the signs). The trail takes you through a stretch of forest eventually reaching Davison Road. Take a right on Davison Road to the wild and scenic Gold Bluffs Beach, then north along the Beach Road to Fern Canyon. Continue north on Coastal trail to Ossagon trail. Ossagon climbs steeply up to the Parkway where you can head south through the ancient trees back to the Park visitor center.

Skunk Cabbage Trail

This moderate 3.7 mile hike to the coast has some steep grades and switchbacks as it climbs across a ridge and descends to the beach. This forested area is primarily salt tolerant Sitka spruce. Alongside the aptly named creek you will find skunk cabbage and a rich variety of stream-side vegetation.

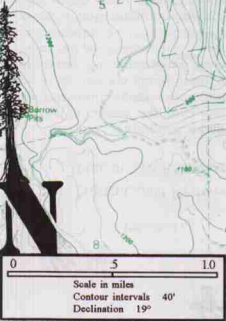
Lost Man Creek -
Holter Ridge Trail

The trailhead for the Lost Man Creek /Holter Ridge bicycle trail begins at Lost Man Creek picnic area. This old logging road climbs through both old growth and second growth forest. The Lost Man Creek trail can be followed along the creek 2 miles to the second bridge. The Lost Man Creek trail becomes the Holter Ridge bicycle trail suitable for mountain bikes. Expect a tough grade as you pass the second bridge. The trail can be followed all the way to Bald Hills Road for a total of 10 miles.

Please remember:

Dogs are not permitted on any trails.
Bicycles on designated trails only.

Trail names	Miles one-way	Difficulty level	Road mile marker
Bicycle/Jogging	19.0/2.0	Easy	
Brown Creek	1.2	Easy	
Cathedral Trees	1.4	Moderate	127.27
Circle	0.3	Very Easy	127.96
Clintonia	1.0	Moderate	
Coastal	11.4	Easy	
C.R.E.A.	1.9	Moderate	
Elk Prairie	1.4	Easy	
Friendship Ridge	2.8	Moderate	
Fern Canyon	0.5	Easy	
5 Minute	0.1	Very Easy	
Foothill	2.2	Moderate	
Hope Creek/Ten Taypo	3.6	Moderate	132.74
James Irvine	4.5	Moderate	
Little Creek	1.0	Easy	131.90
Lost Man Crk/Holter Ridge	2.0/10.0	Easy/Strenuous	124.39
Miner's Ridge	4.1	Moderate	
Nature	1.2	Moderate	
Ossagon	1.6	Moderate	132.74
Prairie Creek	4.3	Easy	
Redwood Access	0.2	Very Easy	
Revelation	0.3	Very Easy	
Rhododendron	7.8	Moderate	130.54
Skunk Cabbage	2.7	Strenuous	122.69
South Fork	0.9	Strenuous	129.00
West Ridge	6.8	Moderate	
Zig Zag #1	0.5	Strenuous	
Zig Zag #2	0.5	Strenuous	130.54



Vehicles or combinations of vehicles over 8 feet in width or 24 feet in length prohibited on Davison Road.

